

Cage

Grandmother died in my bed
before I was old enough for school.
They put her in a box,
closed the door and shovelled dirt over her.

Mother said, "Kiss mama, dear."
She lifts me up and she puts me down.
I look up at my mother —
there is a bird inside her face
trying to get out.

— Bettyweiss Olsen

at lake.

my grandfather smelled of yellow Geographics
old unread a silverfishsmell
his harsh brown chair bearing musk, the lake
 .from scrod sun on gravel and sharp of pine
to fan/refrigerator blank and whir
was your eyes geblindaninstant
in the deer
my grandmother smelled of garden dirt
laundry soap how hard the dining chairs were
 .it was good to sleep to summer smell
boat-gas sandals
of yellow Geographics

— jo McDougall
Stuttgart, Arkansas